

Sport & Society
History 390/KIN 345
Spring 2012

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Class Meeting: T-TH 2 -320 pm, Greg 315
Office hours: M 1-230 pm; W by Appt.

Course Description:

Many social commentators have hailed the racial integration of professional baseball as a watershed event in the march toward civil rights. Significantly, scholars have debated the impact integration had on Black communities and on the whole of U.S. society. Specifically, some have considered the negative impact baseball integration had on the race institutions that were formed in Black communities during the Jim Crow era of segregation and the color line. Others have argued that integration could have unfolded differently than how it was instituted by Major League Baseball, and that this should be considered in any historical evaluation of baseball's racial integration. This course's focus on the racial integration of professional baseball will prompt us to consider integration as a process that was neither a guaranteed success nor an inevitable outcome. In addition to its impact on African Americans, we will examine how the experience of other racialized minorities, most specifically Latinos, illuminate the complexities of baseball's color line and how their stories complicate or reaffirm the more popular known narratives written about baseball and integration.

Course readings thus focus on the different actors and communities that campaigned for or against integration as the process unfolded as well as its international impact. Assigned materials will offer different interpretations about the actors and their motivations in either supporting or opposing integration. In so doing, we will explore what are some of the possibilities and limitations of using sport, specifically baseball, as the medium to analyze questions such as integration and racial equality. Finally, this class will be taught in a discussion-based format, with a heavy emphasis on active student participation. Written assignments will consist of three response papers (3-4 pages) and a critical book review as the final paper assignment (10-12 pages).

Course Texts:

- Alpert, Rebecca. *Out of Left Field: Jews and Black Baseball* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2011)
- Bryant, Howard. *Shut Out: A Story of Race and Baseball in Boston* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2003)
- Burgos, Adrian. *Playing America's Game: Baseball, Latinos, and the Color Line* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007).
- Gay, Timothy. *Satch, Dizzy, and Rapid Robert: The Wild Saga of Interracial Baseball Before Jackie Robinson* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2010)
- Lanctot, Neil. *Negro League Baseball: The Rise and Ruin of a Black Institution* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008)
- Ruck, Rob. *Raceball: How the Major Leagues Colonized the Black and Latin Game* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2011)
- Tygiel, Jules. *Baseball's Great Experiment: Jackie Robinson and His Legacy* (New York: Oxford University Press, rep. 2007)

Course Requirements and Assignments:

Attendance and Class Participation (25% of final grade): Attendance and participation represent vital components to success in this course. More than three unexcused absences will result in an automatic full letter grade deduction—contact me beforehand if you must miss a class. Preparation to discuss the assigned materials for each class meeting is expected of everyone. A variety of classroom exercises to ensure you are staying up-to-date with the readings and are contributing to the class discussion will occur throughout the term. Finally, participation in discussion will not be assessed on a per-capita basis—that is, I will look for quality of insights shared versus sheer quantity of comments made in class. Sitting silently is not acceptable; I will do my best to have a representative sampling of student participation in class: for example, students who have not spoken in a given class session will be given priority over those who have already had opportunities to share their insights.

Discussion facilitators (5%): Each student will serve on a discussion facilitation team responsible for leading a class session. This task involves preparing a lesson plan with objectives and discussion questions, making a brief presentation on the assigned readings, and then leading discussion. Presentations should not just summarize the readings but also critique, analyze, and raise critical questions. Presenters should meet beforehand, consult with me to discuss their preparations, and email their lesson plan the evening before they lead class discussion.

Response Papers (35%): Three response papers (3-4 pages) are designed as an opportunity for you to engage in critical writing by analyzing the manner the readings illuminate continuing issues about sport history, baseball's integration, and the complexities involved in the process of integration or the different motivations of the actors involved. The best tactic is to focus your paper on a couple of specific issues raised in the readings, provide a balanced portrayal of the author's arguments by placing it in a historical context, and then offering your critique in a nuance manner. (In other words, balance is key—do not create a 'dummy' argument by the author in order to knock the author's position down).

Final Paper: Critical Review (35%): Each student will write an extended critical review essay (10-12 pages) on one of the course's assigned texts. This essay involves locating academic book reviews and historiographical articles on the subject covered in your chosen book, then writing an essay that critically analyzes your book in terms of themes and concepts we have learned in class while providing a critique of the author's argument, evidence, etc. Since this essay involves outside work, you are required to meet with me during office hours to discuss your progress and the process of producing a critical review that privileges your own voice.

Papers and late policy: All submitted work must be typed and proofread, careless editing will not be tolerated. All assignments are due at the beginning of the scheduled class; tardiness to class on dates that work is due will result in a penalty of 3 points for that assignment. Work submitted after the scheduled due date will be deducted 8 points for each day late; papers submitted more than three days late will be assessed 20 points maximum. All papers must include proper attribution of sources (we will discuss appropriate formats in class). Acts of plagiarism will be dealt with in accordance to the University Policy.

Reading Schedule:

January 17 (T): Introduction & Syllabus overview

January 19 (TH): Integration Stories: Why Sport and Society Matters

Jules Tygiel, "Revisiting Bill Veeck and the 1943 Phillies," *Baseball Research Journal* 35: (2007): 109-14.

David M. Jordan, Larry R. Gerlach, and John P. Rossi, "A Baseball Myth Exploded: The Truth About Bill Veeck and the '43 Phillies," *The National Pastime* (1998): 3-14.
http://sabr.org/cmsFiles/Files/Bill_Veeck_and_the_1943_sale_of_the_Phillies.pdf

"A Beautiful Dream" posted on *Shadows and Light: Bringing Baseball History Out Into the Sun* website, <http://rnishi.wordpress.com/tag/1943-philadelphia-phillies/>

Enter Jackie: Baseball's 1st Integration Pioneer

January 24 (T) Tygiel, *Baseball's Great Experiment*, Ch. 1-5, pp. 1-98.

January 26 (Th) Tygiel, *Baseball's Great Experiment*, Ch. 6-10, pp. 99-210.

January 31 (T) Tygiel, *Baseball's Great Experiment*, Ch. 11-14, pp. 211-84.

Feb. 2 (Th) Tygiel, *Baseball's Great Experiment*, Ch. 15-17, pp. 285-344.

Integration Other Stories: Boston

Feb. 7 (T) Bryant, *Shut-Out*, Ch. 1-7, pp. 1-94.

*****Response paper #1 (Tygiel) due in class*****

Feb. 9 (Th) Bryant, *Shut-Out*, Ch. 8-12, pp. 95-155.

Feb. 14 (T) Bryant, *Shut-Out*, Ch.13-17 & epilogue, p. 157-252.

Other Side of the Color Line

Feb. 16 (TH) Lanctot, *Negro League Baseball*, Ch. 1-3, pp. 1-96

Feb. 21 (T) Lanctot, *Negro League Baseball*, Ch. 4-6, pp. 97-203

Feb. 23 (TH) Lanctot, *Negro League Baseball*, Ch. 7-8, pp. 207-299

Feb. 28 (T) Lanctot, *Negro League Baseball*, Ch. 9-11, pp. 300-397.

March 1 (TH) Reading & Writing Day (No Class)

March 6 (T) Gay, *Satch, Dizzy, and Rapid Robert*, Ch. 1-3, pp. 1-70

March 8 (TH) Gay, *Satch, Dizzy, and Rapid Robert*, Ch. 4-6, pp. 71-150

March 13 (T) Gay, *Satch, Dizzy, and Rapid Robert*, Ch. 7-9, pp. 151-218

March 15 (TH) Gay, *Satch, Dizzy, and Rapid Robert*, Ch. 10-12, pp. 219-286

*****Response paper #2 (Bryant, Lanctot or Gay) due in class*****

March 17-25 Spring Break

Revisiting Integration Narratives

March 27 (T) Burgos, *Playing America's Game*, Part I, pp. 1-67.

March 29 (TH) Burgos, *Playing America's Game*, Part II, pp. 69-176

April 3 (T) Burgos, *Playing America's Game*, Part III, pp. 179-268
April 5 (TH) Finish Burgos and start Ruck, *Raceball*, Intro, Ch. 1-2, pp. vii-48

April 10 (T) Ruck, *Raceball*, Ch. 3-4, pp. 49-96
April 12 (TH) Ruck, *Raceball*, Ch. 5-7, pp. 97-171

April 17 (T) Ruck, *Raceball*, Ch. 8-9, pp. 172-235
April 19 (TH) Alpert, Rebecca. *Out of Left Field*, Ch. 1-2, pp. 1-74
*****Response paper #3 (Burgos and/or Ruck) due in class*****

April 24 (T) Alpert, Rebecca. *Out of Left Field*, Ch. 3-4, pp. 75-132
April 26 (TH) Alpert, Rebecca. *Out of Left Field*, Ch. 5-6, pp. 133-192

May 1 (T) **Class Wrap-Up**